

The Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Initiative

Increasing Maryland's Renewable Energy Goal to
50% by 2030



Clean, renewable energy is a powerful driver of economic development and job creation in Maryland. Unfortunately, most of Maryland's electricity still comes from carbon-spewing fossil fuels—coal and natural gas. The harmful emissions from these sources hurt our health, our economy and our climate. We must act now to transform our energy sector away from harmful fossil fuels and toward a clean energy economy.

A broad and diverse coalition of business leaders, public health officials, scientists, labor organizations, clergy members, social justice advocates and environmentalists has come together to call on Maryland's elected officials to double the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) policy to 50% renewable electricity by 2030.

The benefits of the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Campaign

More clean, renewable electricity – like wind and solar energy – to power our homes and businesses will benefit our health, our economy, our climate and our communities, and bring us on a pathway to achieve 100% renewable energy in Maryland.

Health Benefits

Fossil fuel combustion is a public health crisis across Maryland.

- In Baltimore City, the number of children afflicted with asthma is twice the national average.
- Air pollution from fossil fuels disproportionately harm low-income communities and people of color with 68% of African Americans and nearly two in five Latinos living within 30 miles of a coal-fired power plant.¹
- Doubling Maryland's renewable electricity goal will significantly improve the state's air quality, preventing 290 premature deaths and over 3,000 asthma attacks annually.²

Economic Benefits

Maryland is poised to stimulate a statewide resurgence of manufacturing and construction jobs.

- Maryland's solar industry now boasts over 165 companies and employs over 5,000 residents.
- Between 2015 and 2016 the solar industry grew 20 times faster than the state's overall state economy.³
- Raising Maryland's Renewable Portfolio Standard to 50% by 2030 could support and retain nearly 20,000 jobs in the solar industry.
- The wind industry is also beginning to thrive in Maryland - a typical 250 MW wind farm creates about 1,079 jobs over the lifetime of the project.⁴

Climate Benefits

Maryland is a coastal state with over 3,000 miles of tidal shoreline, thus making us one of the most vulnerable states in America to sea level rise.

- Climate change means more severe storms, increased flooding, more extreme heat and droughts other detrimental impacts.
- Increasing Maryland's RPS to 50% would reduce 8.1 million metric tons of CO₂, which is the carbon equivalent of taking 1.7 million cars off the road each year.

Justice Benefits

Low-income communities and communities of color have borne the majority of the costs for dirty energy production.

- Nationally, African Americans comprise of only 6.6% of the solar workforce -- a percentage even lower in Maryland at 5.9%.
- Women currently only represent 28% of the solar workforce.
- In Maryland, low-income communities and communities of color face higher cancer risks from hazardous air pollutants.⁵
- Communities of color are also more likely to live near facilities that emit toxic emissions.⁶

As Maryland's renewable energy industry grows we need to foster a more diverse workforce that is representative of the population and to ensure that as we create economic wealth in Maryland, we are not increasing economic inequality.

A Better, Stronger RPS

The Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Campaign is also committed to stopping all subsidies to waste-to-energy incineration under the state's RPS policy. This will end the practice of Marylanders investing their tax dollars in sources that harm their communities and block investments in clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

Phasing Out Harmful Waste Incineration

The Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Campaign is committed to phasing out incineration as a Tier 1 source in the RPS.

- Incineration threatens local communities and the whole state, which is why many local and statewide groups oppose construction of any new incinerators.
- New clean energy development from removing waste to energy incineration from the RPS would decrease carbon emissions and reduce healthcare costs.
- More investments in clean energy and less dependence on fossil fuel and trash combustion would significantly improve the lives for all communities, especially low income residents and communities of color.

Focusing On Workforce Development

We will partner with government agencies, labor groups and clean energy stakeholders to examine the best funding opportunities to invest in job training in the clean energy industry.

- This will benefit economically distressed regions of the state and to remove barriers for entry in the clean energy economy.
- The policy would also increase funding for capital and loans to help minority-, veteran-, and women-owned businesses enter and grow within the renewable energy industry.

A renewable energy future is an achievable future

This campaign builds on past successes in Maryland. In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly passed the original Clean Energy Jobs Act, achieving a 25% renewable electricity standard by 2020. The bold, visionary goal of 50% by 2030 is the next step in a Maryland powered by 100% clean, renewable energy. We know that together we can work towards a clean, renewable energy future.

References

1. Patterson, J. (2015). Just Energy Policies: Reducing Pollution and Creating Jobs (pp. 3-4, Rep.). Baltimore, MD: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. doi:February 2015
2. Based on data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Avoided Emissions and Generation Tool (AVERT) and Co-Benefits Risk Assessment Screening (COBRA) model. Assumes 6,130 MW of land-based wind development and 1,378 MW of solar development as a result of this bill. See Avert model at <<https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/avoided-emissions-and-generation-tool-avert>>; see COBRA model at <<https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/co-benefits-riskassessment-cobra-screening-model>>
3. Solar Jobs Census 2016. (n.d.). Retrieved September 11, 2017, from <https://www.solarstates.org/#state/maryland/counties/solar-jobs/2016>
4. American Wind Farms: Breaking Down the Benefits from Planning to Production. Rep. Natural Resources Defense Council, Sept. 2012. <<http://www.nrdc.org/energy/files/american-wind-farms-IP.pdf>>
5. Alperg et al. (2005). Socioeconomic and Racial Disparities in Cancer Risk from Air Toxics in Maryland. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1257593/>
6. Wilson et al. (2013). Being Overburdened and Medically Underserved: Assessment of This Double Disparity for Populations in the State of Maryland. <https://ehjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1476-069X-13-26>